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ABSTRACT

In this report, the collective experience of non-professional support staff in academic libraries is suggested to be an invaluable--and often overlooked--human resource in long-range library planning. At Indiana State University Libraries, a special staff development activity was formulated to tap the creative energy of the library support staff as part of a library-wide effort to prepare the institution for the 1990s and the turn of the century. Relying primarily on the technique of small group brainstorming, the day-long activity resulted in many useful suggestions and observations that were helpful in charting the library's course for the future and acted as a morale booster for the staff. The report describes the planning, implementation, and evaluation of staff development activity. Actual planning and implementation documents are included, as well as the evaluation instrument and a brief summary of evaluation results. (SD)

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SUPPORT STAFF INVOLVEMENT IN LIBRARY PLANNING: A STAFF DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

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Terre Haute, Indiana

Spring 1990

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DOCUMENT RESUME

"Support Staff Involvement in Library Planning: A Staff Development Activity"

Non-professional support staff in academic libraries often represent the library's "front line" for day-to-day activities. The collective experience of these individuals can be an invaluable human resource in long-range library planning; unfortunately, this resource is all too often overlooked or not taken seriously. At Indiana State University Libraries, a special staff development activity was developed to tap the creative energies of library support staff as part of a library-wide effort to prepare the institution for the 1990's and the turn of the century. Relying primarily on the technique of small group brainstorming, the day-long activity not only resulted in many useful suggestions and observations that have proven helpful in charting the library's course for the future, it also proved to be a morale booster for support staff, as evidenced by their comments on a written evaluation administered at the end of the day. This document describes the planning, implementation, and evaluation of this staff development activity. Actual planning and implementation documents are included, as well as the evaluation instrument and a brief summary of evaluation results.

SUPPORT STAFF INVOLVEMENT IN LIBRARY PLANNING: A STAFF DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

INTRODUCTION

In early 1987, a Strategic Planning Task Force was formed by the administration of Indiana State University Libraries. The Dean of Library Services charged the group with the development of a strategic planning document which would plot the direction of library growth for the next five years. In the final document's section on personnel, the Strategic Planning Task Force advised the library administration to "formulate a plan for Library faculty and staff development, which includes improved management of human resources and adaptation to change" (Ensor, et al. p. 16).

As a result of this advice, a personnel and staff development consultant was invited by the library administration to visit Indiana State University Libraries during 1988 for two primary purposes: 1) to conduct a staff development activity for the library faculty on the meaning and importance of staff development, and 2) to critically review the existing library staff development program.

In her final report, the consultant noted that:

> The current program and the various accomplishments of the Library Faculty Development Committee form a solid foundation for the formal, well-defined program that is called for in the libraries' strategic planning program. ...Clearly, the most important step to take now is to establish a formal program that addresses the needs of the faculty *and the support staff* [emphasis added] (Sullivan, p. 1).

Further, among her final recommendations, she advised the library administration to:

> Provide separate programs and activities for support staff that are designed to meet their particular needs and that will give them an opportunity to interact with each other and to learn from each other (Ibid., p. 6).

Historically, any formal or systematic efforts at staff development within Indiana State University Libraries had been directed toward library faculty, perhaps the most notable of these efforts being biennial library faculty retreats begun in 1983. These retreats have focused on a specific theme each time they have been held; past themes include: 1) preparing for automation, 2) library strategic planning, and 3) staff adaptation to the library environment of the future. The most recent library faculty retreat was held in August 1989.

In response to the consultant's advice about separate support staff development activities, and using the library faculty retreat as a planning model, the library administration decided to appoint a special task force to develop a meaningful development activity for support staff. The Task Force consisted of two library faculty members (recommended to the Dean by support staff representatives) and three members of the library's support staff. The Dean designated one of the faculty members as chair of the Task Force.

Once the Task Force was organized, the Dean of Library Services met with the group to formally present their charge. He suggested a half-day activity designed "to provide an opportunity

for support staff, using the technique of brainstorming, to generate ideas on how to improve library services." All support staff would be expected to attend. Such an activity would provide a formal opportunity for support staff to voice concerns and make constructive, creative recommendations about library services. Examples of questions for use in the brainstorming sessions were provided as part of the Dean's formal charge to the Task Force. The Task Force met five times after that, once a week until the planned session was held.

PLANNING AND DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

Prior to the Task Force's first meeting, the Chair identified sources about library support staff and the technique of brainstorming helpful to the project (see "Sources Consulted," p. 15). The Chair sent out a notice for the first meeting, which included notes about the technique of brainstorming. During several subsequent meetings the Task Force further developed and revised the brainstorming questions originally offered by the Dean, in order to make them as clear as possible and to elicit the most helpful responses (see Appendix A). Given the purposes of the activity, the Task Force decided to title it "Preparing for the Nineties and Beyond: A 'Frontline' Perspective." The word "frontline" was included in the subtitle to reflect the importance of support staff work in terms of day-to-day operations.

Based on recommendations from the literature, the Task Force adopted a small group approach for using the brainstorming

technique. Using a current support staff roster, the Task Force divided the staff of forty-four into six groups, each consisting of seven or eight individuals per group. The Task Force tried to separate individuals working in the same department in order to encourage more creativity and spontaneity within each group. It was felt that by grouping individuals with people other than those worked with every day, there would be a fresher sharing of ideas, information, and reactions to current library services and procedures.

For each group a facilitator and a recorder were chosen. The Task Force tried to select as facilitators those individuals most likely to interact well with a divergent group, and as recorders those individuals likely to successfully capture on paper the group's ideas. The Task Force had already decided that each group's comments and reactions to questions would be recorded during the activity on large flipcharts. It was felt that by using flipcharts, comments would be visible to everyone in a group and might help to generate more discussion and interaction. After deciding what kind of background information would likely be helpful to the group facilitators prior to the activity, a meeting was planned with all facilitators to prepare them for leading their groups. Handouts to them included information on the brainstorming technique and guidelines for small group discussion leaders (see Appendix B).

Each facilitator was also asked to meet with the recorder for his/her group prior to the brainstorming session, to discuss

ways they might communicate most effectively during the sessions. Group recorders were not included in the facilitators' meeting so as to keep the group small; however, a member of the Task Force talked to each recorder ahead of time to clarify their responsibilities and help them become comfortable using the flipcharts.

The Task Force prepared a schedule for the day of the activity, consisting of two morning sessions divided by a break, and a wrap-up session after lunch (see Appendix C). The schedule also included a working lunch period for the Task Force, during which they could develop an overview of the morning sessions' results for a report back to the entire support staff in the afternoon wrap-up session. The Task Force also designed an evaluation instrument (see Appendix D) and discussed various options of how final results of the activity could be reported back to the entire library staff.

Members of the Task Force divided other logistical/planning duties. One person arranged for refreshments to be ready at the beginning of the day and for the morning break. Another arranged for flipcharts and markers to be available and scheduled the rooms needed for the day. Others worked on determining appropriate content for handouts and developing them for distribution to participants.

The Task Force planned appropriate publicity. About ten days before the event, a half-page notice was sent to each support staff member indicating the basic who, what, when, where,

and why of the activity (see Appendix E). An announcement and calendar reminder were also included in the weekly library staff publication during the two weeks prior to the activity. On the Monday before the session (planned for Friday), the Task Force sent to all support staff a cover letter, the schedule for the day, and basic guidelines for brainstorming. The reason for providing this information several days ahead of time was to inform people of what to expect and to help those unfamiliar with the technique of brainstorming feel better prepared. Because the Task Force wanted to focus staff thinking on meeting library goals and improving library services for the future, also included in the materials distributed ahead of time were a copy of the Library's mission statement and goals, and a handout entitled "Food for Thought," which provided excerpts from the Library's Strategic Plan (see Appendix F).

The Task Force asked the Dean of Library Services to start off the day with brief comments about why he had requested this activity and what he hoped to see accomplished. The Task Force Chair then gave an overview of the day's activities and went over basic guidelines for brainstorming. The opening session wrapped up with a brief trial run through an actual brainstorming session on the concept of "productivity in the work place."

It was anticipated that if the list of group members circulated prior to the day of the activity, people might switch group assignments to be with friends; therefore, the Task Force withheld the group assignments until the activity began. Only

the group facilitators and recorders knew in advance that they would be working together. Following the brainstorming trial run, the Chair coordinated the formation of the small groups by reading out staff names and their respective group assignments. As groups left the meeting area, they got their small group room assignment and were given the two questions for the first brainstorming session. Even though the facilitators and the Task Force members already knew what the questions were, to preserve some spontaneity, the questions were not circulated to the rest of the staff until the small groups were formed.

The questions for the second session were given to group recorders or facilitators when they brought to the Task Force members the flip chart sheets from the first session. The two librarians on the Task Force started immediately to work with the first session flip chart notes in an effort to organize group responses for the summarizing presentation in the afternoon. Immediately following the second brainstorming session, the Task Force met and, during a working lunch, began to pull from the combined group notes recurring comments and reactions to the brainstorming questions.

During the one-hour afternoon wrap-up session, members of the Task Force presented to all participants summaries of group responses to specific brainstorming questions. Participants were pleased to discover the numerous similarities in group perceptions and suggestions regarding library services.

At the end of the afternoon summarizing session, evaluation

forms were distributed to all participants. In order to ensure a good return of completed evaluations, participants were encouraged to fill them out before they left. One Task Force member took responsibility for tabulating evaluation responses and developing a summary of comments. In less than three weeks, the Task Force had transcribed all the notes taken in all groups. With the summary of the evaluation forms, all this material was sent to support staff and librarians with a letter from the Dean, thanking people for their efforts and indicating that he had asked various committees to study the results and see what suggestions could be implemented. This material has also been set up as a database file using dBase III+ for future access as needed.

CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions and observations are based on Task Force members' planning for and participation in the activity, and a review of participants' evaluation responses:

1. The brainstorming activity was well-received by the support staff. The small group sessions stayed on a serious and productive level, never degenerating into a litany of complaints. The concerns identified by support staff during the small group sessions were very practical ones; they tended to focus on services and patrons' needs. Much of what was suggested had, of course, been suggested many times elsewhere by others. In fact, it was noticeable to the librarians that some of the same things

discussed by the librarians during their biennial retreats and elsewhere surfaced again here. Some things mentioned, predictably, contradicted ideas and suggestions mentioned elsewhere; however, the diversity in thinking and in approaching problems was encouraging. While many of the brainstorming suggestions may not be workable for reasons of current staffing and/or funding, most seem not only reasonable but positive, creative, and highly desirable.

2. Many staff indicated during the summary session and on their written evaluation that they had been apprehensive or had even dreaded the day, but they were pleasantly surprised at what happened. Several came to members of the Task Force and thanked them for the experience and said that they had enjoyed the day and looked forward to another such activity. A majority of support staff expressed the desire to have a similar activity at least once a year. However, an annual frequency is unlikely because of the substantial amount of staff time involved in the planning and in the execution of such an activity. Also, conducting such an activity too frequently could dilute the spontaneity so evident in the activity described here. Finally, sufficient time between activities in necessary in order for significant actions to be taken toward change and improvement. Like the library faculty retreats, every other year may be possible.

3. During the afternoon session the Task Force was asked if there could be a follow-up session within the next year to report

back on what has been or will be implemented, as well as what will not be implemented and why. The consensus seemed to be that such a follow-up was needed in order for the participants to feel that they had been listened to and taken seriously.

4. It clearly was helpful to have small groups, rather than keeping everyone together in a single large group; it was helpful also that the groups were made up entirely of support staff (no librarians, no administrators, no outside presentors), so that any comments perceived as dangerous or subversive were heard only by peers, not by supervisors. Once written on the flip charts, all comments were grouped with others so that no individual speaker could be identified.

5. Some of the ideas and perceptions which surfaced in the small group discussions indicate the need for better communication between library departments, because they simply show a lack of understanding of what goes on elsewhere in the library. Perhaps academic libraries need to do more practical training of support staff through increased support staff involvement in committee and special project work, or through orientation activities to other units within the library.

Following the brainstorming activity, the Task Force compiled a detailed list of the support staff's suggestions and observations regarding library services. Copies of the list were distributed to all Library staff members and have since served as the basis for discussions in department heads meetings and meetings of other advisory groups. The Dean of Library Services

directed the Associate Deans and Department Heads to consider the suggestions in their planning activities. Specific actions already taken on any of the support staff suggestions have been announced in the Library's regular Monday announcements. A follow-up session, as suggested by the support staff, is under consideration as a possible fall activity.

Whoever the audience--support staff, librarians, faculty, administrators, students--there will always be legitimate reasons why some of their suggestions may not be workable or practical. But by allowing various groups, in this case library support staff, the opportunity to provide serious input regarding the future direction of the library, Indiana State University Libraries managed to boost support staff moral and strengthen lines of communication between support staff and the library administration. Further, by encouraging library support staff to actively participate in activities such as the one described here, they are more likely to grow as individuals and as productive library staff members. "Preparing for the Nineties and Beyond" was well worth the planning effort and, in all likelihood, will serve as a model for similar future support staff development activities.

SOURCES CONSULTED

The following selective list makes no claim to cover all aspects of brainstorming and library support staff. It is merely a list of sources with different emphases--creativity and change, brainstorming and related techniques, library support staff--that proved helpful in this particular project and in the preparation of this document.

* Adams, James L. Conceptual Blockbusting: A Guide to Better Ideas. San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1974.

* Clark, Charles H. Brainstorming, the Dynamic New Way to Create Successful Ideas. Garden City: Doubleday, 1958.

Ensor, Pat et al. Strategic Plan for Indiana State University Libraries: 1987-1992. Terre Haute, IN: Indiana State University, 1987. ERIC Document 290-490.

Gavryck, Jacquelyn. "Library Instruction for Clerical Staff: The Rest of the Iceberg," Journal of Academic Librarianship 11(1986), 343-345.

Gill, Suzanne. "New Directions for Library Paraprofessionals?" Wilson Library Bulletin 55 (January 1981), 368-370.

Jones, Dorothy E. "Library Support Staff and Technology: Perceptions and Opinions," Library Trends 37 (Spring 1989), 432-456.

Keil, John M. The Creative Mystique: How to Manage It, Nurture It, and Make It Pay. New York: Wiley, 1985.

Kirkland, Janice & Linda S. Dobb. "The Retreat as a Response to Change," Library Trends 37 (Spring 1989), 495-509.

* Kuhn, Robert L., ed. Handbook for Creative and Innovative Managers. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1988.

Lippitt, Gordon L. et al. Implementing Organizational Change. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1985.

Mularski, Carol A. and Pamela S. Bradigan. "Library Workshops for Special Audiences: Secretaries, Research Assistants, and Other Support Staff," Bulletin of the Medical Library Association 76 (April 1988), 151-154.

Perkins, D. N. The Mind's Best Work. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1981.

Presley, Roger L. and Carolyn L. Robison. "Changing Roles of Support Staff in an Online Environment," Technical Services Quarterly 4 (Fall 1986), 25-39.

Sullivan, Maureen. "Indiana State University [Libraries] Consultation on Staff Development," unpublished consultant's report, 1988.

Taylor, Jack Wilson. How to Create New Ideas. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1961.

Timpe, A. Dale. Creativity. New York: Facts on File, 1987.

Watzlawick, Paul, et al. Change: Principles of Problem Formation and Problem Resolution. New York: Norton, 1974.

Webb, Gisela M. "Educating Librarians and Support Staff for Technical Services," Journal of Library Administration 9 (1988), 111-120.

* excerpts were taken from these sources and used in the handouts for group facilitators (see Appendix B).

Appendix A

Brainstorming Questions

BRAINSTORMING QUESTIONS - FIRST SESSION

1. Given the Library's stated goals, how can we improve library services and collections for students and faculty?

2. Assuming current staffing, what can be done to make your own work/your department's work more effective?

BRAINSTORMING QUESTIONS - SECOND SESSION

3. There are many ways to reach the Library's goals and objectives. In an effort to find the best ways,

   a. What tasks or services are needed to support patrons but are *not* available?

   b. What current services and/or tasks could be eliminated in order to free resources for other, more important efforts? (What are the best priorities for our work?)

4. Each of us enjoys work more and contributes more if we have "job satisfaction." What gives you job satisfaction?

Appendix B

Information for Group Facilitators:

Guidelines for Small Group Discussion Leaders

The Brainstorming Technique

GUIDELINES FOR SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION LEADERS*

1. Become very familiar with the topic and background materials.

2. Look at the discussion questions and give thought to them and to where the discussion might lead.

3. Meet with your Recorder before November 17. Be sure you are both clear about the purpose of the discussion and the desired outcomes. You may wish to set up signals by which to communicate during the discussion. For example, will the Facilitator instruct the Recorder when to write something?

4. Sit opposite you Recorder so you can communicate easily; you may wish to face each other across the group.

5. Energize the group. Your energy, positive attitude, and enthusiasm are often transferred to and adopted by the group participants.

6. Set up necessary ground rules for the discussion. Explain the purpose of the discussion, the agenda, and the process to be followed. Most of this information will be presented in the initial session on November 17; you may just need to reinforce the guidelines.

7. Keep the discussion going:
   a. Listen to each speaker carefully.
   b. Synthesize, restate, summarize, check perceptions, ask clarifying questions, provide feedback as necessary.
   c. Try to draw everyone out. Call on quiet members in a non-threatening way.
   d. Discourage persons who might wish to dominate, either through ground rules or firm reminders that everyone should have a chance to offer his/her opinions.
   e. Keep the discussion on track. Discourage irrelevant topics and long personal narratives. Attempt to maintain a steady level of generality or specificity as needed.

8. Keep track of time. Maintain a balance between providing adequate time for discussion and completing the agenda (minimum of 20 minutes per topic). Also, maintain a balance between the free flow of ideas and a directed discussion.

9. Save time during and at the end of the discussion of each topic for the Recorder to report on what was discussed, to ask clarifying questions.

* adapted from OCLC Users Council

THE BRAINSTORMING TECHNIQUE

Brainstorming is a problem solving technique developed by Alex Osborn in the 1930s. It remains "a useful management tool not just to solve problems but also to help develop employees, establish policy, improve communication, and determine new business activities" (Robert Kerwin, "Brainstorming as a Flexible Management Tool" in Creativity, pp. 202-205).

Kerwin offers the following rules (p. 203):

1. No criticism or value judgments can be allowed during the sessions.
2. The quantity of ideas is more important than the quality of any single idea.
3. The number of participants should be between six and ten, including the leader. This number is large enough to keep the ideas flowing, but small enough to let everyone participate.
4. Participation, not ideas, should be complimented. If the leader compliments specific ideas, an atmosphere of reward seeking develops. What you are after is a freewheeling outpouring of ideas.
5. The leader should record each idea as it occurs, but these notes should not identify the author with the idea. Failing to observe this precaution can make the more sensitive participants clam-up because they don't want to say anything stupid. Remember, even bad ideas can and will generate good ones.
6. Each session should embrace at most for topics, and about one hour per topic should be allotted.

According to Charles Clark, Brainstorming, the point is to "storm" a problem with dozens of ideas. The subconscious is allowed to respond and set off free associations. This technique works best when it is "directly oriented to action." It doesn't work well on judicial questions ("should we..."); it is better on "what can we do to increase/improve..." or "how can x department improve service to patrons?" The more detailed the question, the better. It is best not to give out the questions ahead of time.

"The technique is directed to generating unconventional ideas by suppressing the common tendency to criticize or reject them summarily." Idea evaluation is separated from idea generation because "if evaluation comes early, it reduces the number and quality of the ideas produced. Therefore, in a brainstorming session no criticism is permitted, and the freewheeling generation of large number of ideas and their combination and development are encouraged" (Robert L. Kuhn, Handbook for Creative and Innovative Managers, pp. 81-82).

Appendix C

Schedule for the Day

SCHEDULE FOR THE DAY

8:15 Coffee, tea ready

8:30 Dean's comments

9:15 First break-out session, to last from 40 min. to 60 min.

Refreshment break in B-45

Second break-out session, to last from 60 min. to 90 min.

By 12:00 Groups bring Task Force the results

12:00 Task Force organizes separate group reports into unified responses to each question

2:00 Group reconvenes for summary report

Appendix D

Evaluation Instrument

INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Participant Evaluation of

PREPARING FOR THE NINETIES AND BEYOND:
A 'FRONTLINE' PERSPECTIVE - November 17, 1989

1. The session overall was worthwhile.

   Strongly Agree___ Agree___ Disagree___ Strongly Disagree___

2. It would be useful to have some similar kind of activity

   every year___ every other year___ less frequently___

3. The technique of "brainstorming" was helpful.

   Strongly Agree___ Agree___ Disagree___ Strongly Disagree___

4. The amount of time allotted for discussion was

   too much time___ about right___ too little time___

5. The material sent out ahead of time was helpful.

   Strongly Agree___ Agree___ Disagree___ Strongly Disagree___

6. What was most positive about the session?

7. What was most negative about the session?

8. Any additional comments or suggestions? Use back of page if needed.

9. I have worked in the ISU Libraries

   Less than 1 year___ Between 1 and 5 years___
   Between 6 and to years___ Over 10 years___

10. I work in Technical Services___ Public Services___ Other___

Appendix E

Publicity Flier

"Preparing for the Nineties and Beyond:

a 'Frontline' Perspective"

...a special gathering of Library biweekly staff for the sharing of ideas and generation of creative ways to prepare ourselves, and the Library, for the future.

When: Friday, November 17, 1989... there will be a morning brainstorming session and an afternoon wrap-up session
Where: Rm B-45

More details later!

Appendix F

Information for Participants:

Cover Letter

Schedule for the Day &
Guidelines for Group Discussion

Library Mission Statement
& Goals

Food for Thought

Indiana State University
Cunningham Memorial Library

November 13, 1989

PREPARING FOR THE NINETIES AND BEYOND:

A 'FRONTLINE' PERSPECTIVE

WHAT? a special gathering of Library biweekly staff for the sharing of ideas and generation of creative ways to prepare ourselves, and the Library, for the future

WHEN? Friday, November 17, 1989, beginning at 8:30 a.m.

WHERE? Cunningham Memorial Library, B45

The Task Force that has been planning for this meeting looks forward to sharing ideas with you. Please carefully examine the attached materials so that you will be well prepared for the day.

Attached are a schedule for the day, some guidelines for group discussion, the mission and goals of the Library, and some excerpts from the Library's Strategic Plan. Please bring these materials with you on Friday, and come prepared to give your creative best!

Task Force Members

Ruth H. Miller, Chair
H. Scott Davis
Mary Ann Phillips
Wilma Turetzky
Pam Wasmer

Terre Haute, Indiana 47809
(812) 237-3700

SCHEDULE FOR THE DAY

8:15 Coffee, tea ready

8:30 Dean's comments

9:15 First break-out session, to last from 40 min. to 60 min.

Refreshment break in B-45

Second break-out session, to last from 60 min. to 90 min.

By 12:00 Groups bring Task Force the results

12:00 Task Force organizes separate group reports into unified responses to each question

2:00 Group reconvenes for summary report

GUIDELINES FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

The purpose of the group discussions is, through brainstorming, to produce as many ideas as possible in response to a particular issue. In order to facilitate a free flow of ideas, the four basic rules listed below will be observed:

1. CRITICISM IS RULED OUT.
   Adverse judgment of ideas must be withheld until later.

2. "FREE-WHEELING" AND "BLUE-SKYING" ARE WELCOMED.
   It is easier to tone down than to think up.

3. QUALITY IS GOOD, BUT QUANTITY IS BETTER.
   The greater the number of ideas, the more likely we are to find the best ones to address the issues.

4. IMPROVEMENT IS SOUGHT.
   Participants should suggest how ideas of others can be turned into better ideas.

11/89

INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES'

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Indiana State University Libraries is to provide recorded information and library services to support the educational, research, recreation and service needs of the faculty, administration, students, and staff. The Libraries also recognize their responsibility to provide library resources to members of the local community, the citizens of the state, and scholars from around the state and nation.

GOALS

- Acquire, organize, preserve and protect collections pertinent to the present and future programs of the University.
- Assist users in the process of identifying, locating and interpreting recorded information and knowledge.
- Seek adequate financial support to fulfill the mission of the Library.
- Apply appropriate technology which will improve and expand services available to members of the academic community.
- Collaborate with the faculty, administration, and students in determining the nature of the collection and user resources.
- Promote awareness and full use of library resources and services.
- Anticipate and respond to new trends in scholarship, instruction and the communication and delivery of information.
- Effectively use financial and human resources available for the development of quality library service.
- Provide appropriate facilities and hours of service for library users.
- Engage in regional, state and national efforts of interlibrary cooperation to provide access to needed information located elsewhere.

1989

Food for Thought

"Preparing for the Nineties and Beyond: a 'Frontline' Perspective"
Indiana State University Libraries - November 17, 1989

According to the *ISU Libraries' Strategic Plan* (December 1987, p. 5), "by 1992, ISU Libraries should be in the process of becoming:

1. an organization which places highest priority on serving the information needs of its primary user population -- students, faculty, and staff of Indiana State University;

2. a collector of materials that best serves the learning and research needs of ISU users, with attention to quality rather than quantity, and to using technology to increase access to materials held and more specialized materials not owned by the Library;

3. an information utility for the ISU campus, which the University community sees as a gateway for access to scholarly information on campus and in the city, the state, the country, and the world;

4. a teacher, facilitator, and consultant for those who want and/or need to acquire information for themselves;

5. an institution open to networking and cooperating with other libraries and agencies using all available technologies to increase information access for its users and others; and

6. an employer of personnel who are flexible and adaptable enough to be open to changes brought about by new technologies and other future developments."

Further, the *Strategic Plan* makes the following predictions about the near future (pp. 7-8):

"...a continuing decrease in 'traditional college age population until 1995'."

"...an influx of younger faculty who may be more research oriented."

"...With the advent of the revised general education program within the next two years, students will be encouraged to do more writing, and additional interdisciplinary courses are likely to materialize."

"The priorities for providing user services in ISU Libraries will be based on these principles: (a) increasing access to information by using the latest available technologies; (b) emphasizing the active teaching, consulting, and advisory roles of the Library in accessing information while still providing information and a final product where appropriate; (c) making access to information and materials as convenient as possible for ISU users within existing resource limitations; and (d) devoting greater attention to promoting and marketing ISU Libraries' services and collections."

11/89